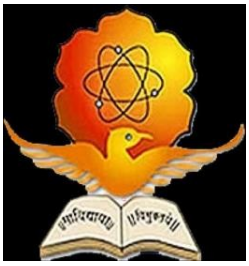

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Multiculturalism in Indian Dalit Drama and Black AmericanDrama: A Comparative Study

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MULTICULTURALISM IN INDIAN DALIT DRAMA AND BLACK AMERICAN DRAMA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

I] Introduction:

The Concept of Multiculturalism was originated in the 1970s and was in Canada for the first time to tackle the problems of immigrants. Multiculturalism is defined as the state of co-existence of diverse cultures. Cultures includes racial, religious, linguistic, etc. Multiculturalism is a phenomenon of multiple groups of cultures existing within one society, largely due to arrived of immigrants communities. Their cultural identities reflected in every aspect of life-worship, fellowship, leadership, religious education, social justice, etc. As a result of international migration, Multiculturalism has become the dominant theory in the last 20-30 years in some countries of western civilization. That is why multiculturalism became prominent theme of some dramas. Authors who had first hand experience of both cultures, they presented their experiences through their books. Multiculturalism takes these familiar cultural markers of ethnic groups - clothing, cuisine and music and treats them as authentic practices to be preserved by their members and safely consumed by others. Under the banner of Multiculturalism they are taught in school, performed in festivals, displayed in media and museums and so on. Multiculturalism can restore cultural rights by emphasizing cultural equality and respect. In the recent years, the idea of Multiculturalism has become a powerful and controversial influence in a variety of social and cultural territories. The present research work proposes to analyze and compare the multicultural elements in select dramas. The phenomena of Multiculturalism and expatriation are by all means an old one. However, its impact in the present times is larger and deeper. Multiculturalism is a social theory but plays vital role in literary studies. It brings together different themes such as cultural diversity, recognition, mutual concord, peaceful coexistence of many cultures and subcultures. Development in the studies of globalization and interculturalism, already representing a wider study than the single language nation-state approach, may be well suited to move away from the paradigm of the nation-state. Multiculturalism is so intimately bound up in

many parts of the world with those practices and discourses which manage diversity. Multiculturalism means different things in different contexts and in Canada, United State of America and United Kingdom, the term is intertwined with questions of racialized differences that have so far not been given sufficient recognition India.

India is the best example of multicultural society where people speaks 122 major language and 1599 other language. The Indian society has been multi-cultural, multi-religious and multi-linguistic. Indian culture is different from that of other countries i.e. America, Canada, Australia, within India, culture changes from state to state, region to region, religion to religion. Multiculturalism in India is too often ignored as a significant factor in the proliferating work in cultural studies or as part of society progressive critical theory. As an official policy Multiculturalism succeeds to create social cultural harmony, cultural tolerance and respected among different cultures.

Multiculturalism in literature is attempt to show the ethnic diversity in American experience. It came to light in the 20th century. In the 19th century, American literature was primarily defined by white writers attempting to forge an American Identity that was white and Anglo-Saxon, based on European culture but differing from it in being more democratic, more assertively masculine and more individualistic. In the latter half of the century, with concern about in invasion of immigrant 'hordes' from southern and eastern Europe, an aggressively white middle- brow literature that celebrated Colonialism and The American Revolution and Associated American history with white 'purity' began to emerge as did a nostalgic literature painting southern slavery with soft hues as a benign institution. In 20th century, Multiculturalism began to gather steam and push back. Integral to Multicultural Literature is the idea that people of other cultures be allowed to tell their own story in their own voice and this began to happen. The Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, is an early instance of Multiculturalism Black writers began to create their own narratives instead of being forced to rely on whites to tell their story for them. After World War II and especially from the 1960s onward, an explosion of multicultural literature emerged as African-Americans, Native Americans, Chinese American, Irish Americans, Indian Americans and other demographics began to write of their own experiences. Themes of multicultural literature often include difficulties of assimilating to the dominant culture, the harm caused by the conflicts between native and dominant culture.

The present dramas compare Multicultural aspects not only within India but also those of India with other countries. The researcher has been selected four dramatist in the heterogeneous culture. The present study intends to compare and contrast such kind of experiences and notions of dramatism with the help of select Indian Dalit Marathi and black American dramas. In order to state a research statement, following writers and their representative works will be considered for the present study.

Indian Dalit Marathi Writer:

Datta Bhagat:

Datta Bhagat was born on 13th June 1945 in Waghi village of Nanded district, Maharashtra. He is an Indian playwright, Ambedkarite thinker and one of the leader of the dalit theater movement. He was selected as the president of the 37th Marathwada Sahitya Sammelan of Marathwada Sahitya Parishad. His plays deals with social, religions and political agitation. He started his career as a short story writer but soon devoted to theater. He was first introduce to readers in 1964. His one act plays highly praised by reputed critics and men of theaters. Datta Bhagat's *Wata-Palwata* (1986) translated into English as *Routes and Escape Routes* won him world-wide recognition and critics praised him for his dramatic art. Among his others successful plays include *Ekti*, *Ashmak* and *Khelia*.

The play that gave Bhagat wide critical acclaim is *Avart* translated as *Whirlpool*. It was written in 1978, in two popular traditional forms of Dindi and Tamasha. The reason behind using these forms was that these forms are affiliated to their lower caste Mahar practitioner like African-American with Blues.

Routes and Escape Routes, is the play that gave Datta Bhagat international recognition. The play presents three generations of a Dalit family and their differing responses to a situation of Dalit need and caste violence. The play constructs caste mentalities as unsurpassable in order to critique humanism and so merge a critique of a middle class Dalit protagonist that brings his limitations of comprehensive Dalit victimhood. The violet clash between the two flood victim communities highlight the limitations of Satish's idealism dissolution of caste identities and Arjun's impatience.

Premanand Gajvi:

Premanand Gajvi was born in 1947, a Marathi playwright, writer and poet. He is well known for his social commitment to effectively shape the disorganized truth of the society. Gajvi was selected as the chairperson of the 99th Akhil Bhartiya Marathi Natya Sammelan. He represents the Ambedkarite theatre which has been traditionally called Dalit theatre. It has been written for theatre by Gajvi in the 20th century, is the real achievement of Marathi literature. His plays become the source of Indian culture. In this chapter, researcher is motivated to interpret Gajvi's selected plays with the perspective of culture study. Gajvi analyses the problems of dam workers with the undercurrents of a caste-system and post-independence culture.

Tan-Majori is popularly known for its revolutionary thoughts. Gajvi skillfully merges the philosophical purport in its plot. Education makes conscious to the man about his slavery and then he is ready to rebel for basic rights to equality, fraternity and liberty. It is the way to obtain Justice. The traditional cultural system is changed due to implementation of the constitutional culture. The Indian constitution has opened the doors for oppressed classes to choose their favorite occupations. Owner is dictator of the contemporary period and he represents the traditional Vedic culture. They finish dictatorship and open the door of freedom with a new culture.

Wyakaran was first performed in 2010 and published in 2011. He handled contemporary problem with global reference. Gajvi faces the problems of Adivasi. It is the picture of dam-affected movement with political controversies. Though it seems to be the biographical sketch of a leadership of a distinct organization from real life. He is worried about the native culture and social status of Adivasi, Dalit, and exploited class of the country. The play basically shows the cultural and social problem occurred due to globalization. The main identification of this play is tantamount to revive the culture of Adivasi. The play focuses the life of Adivasi and their ongoing problems are at the center of Gajvi's intention of writing. It should be considered that the play is realistic survey of the terrible condition of Adivasi's current life. In fact, this play gives the new intention to see the problems how the culture is suffered due to globlization.

Black American Writers:

August Wilson:

August Wilson was born on 27th April 1945. He was an American playwright. He has been referred to as the Theater's Poet of Black America. Wilson is best known for a series of ten plays, collectively called 'The Pittsburgh Cycle' which chronicles the experiences and heritage of the African-American community in the 20th century. His works delve into the African-American experience as well as examinations of the human condition. Other themes range from the systematic and historical exploitation of African American as well as race relations, identity, migration, and racial discrimination.

Fences is a 1985 and set in the 1950s. It explores the evolving African-American experience and examine race relations, multicultural views among other themes. Wilson saw this struggle for equality morphing into a culture that was attempting to erase the difference between races and peoples. They have their own distinct culture, history and society. No people should have to become part of the majority culture just to enjoy the majority's rights and privileges.

The most prominent theme In *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* is the idea of identity. Each of the characters, whether or not they realise it, is looking for his or her identity as an American, African, man, woman, businessman and or artist. Just because the civil war decided the emancipation of slaves did not mean that human rights for the freed slaves were guaranteed. African Americans had to fight to find an identity in a strange hostile environment while trying to hold on to their African roots. The shuffling of people after the emancipation of the slaves caused many social and cultural issues throughout the nation.

Lorraine Hansberry:

Lorraine Hansberry was born on 19th May 1930, a playwright and writer. She was the first African American female author to have a play performed on Broadway. Much of her work during this time concerned the African struggles for liberation and their impact on the world.

A Raising in the Sun published in the early days of Civil Rights Movement in 1959. It was widely acclaimed once it was staged Broadway and played more than 530 consecutive shows. Hansberry thus became the first black female writer to set foot on Broadway and the first black dramatist to win the Best Drama Award in New York Drama Critics. The rise of Multiculturalism poses many challenges to traditional American creeds.

The characters in the text either completed the unity of the national identity and ethnic identity by buying a new house, or complete in the construction of the ethnic identity as mature black subject identity of self-esteem and self-love and the reconciliation of the national identity and ethnic identity by returning to African culture. Multiculturalism plays, a positive role in promoting equal stature of cultural differences. At the same time, it provides a new perspective for the research of Black American literature.

The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window is the play about a man named Sidney, his pitfalls within his personal life, and struggles in Bohemian culture. It encompasses themes of race, suicide and homosexuality and also focuses on individual characters leaning to cope with life. The play reflects many cultural disputes of the time one of which is women's struggle for equality. The women in the play struggle for equality, to be recognized in a male dominated world. Another theme in the play is the frailty of the human race throughout the play these intrinsic flaws represent the imperfection of people.

II] Aims and Objectives of Study:

The present research aimed to comparatively analyze the above mentioned eight dramas with multicultural perspective. The objectives of the study as follows:

- To study Indian Dalit drama and Black American drama history and development.
- To prepare a theoretical framework of the term Multiculturalism to analyze the select dramas.
- To compare the select plays of Indian Dalit dramatists and Black American dramatists in the light of Multiculturalism.
- To understand the influence of the respective cultures on the select plays of the representative authors.

- To find out the aspects of Multiculturalism such as cultural diversity, cultural conflict, recognition, peaceful coexistence of cultures and subcultures.
- Quest for multicultural identities reflected in every aspect of life through select dramas.

III] Research Methodology:

The research methodology consist the collection of primary sources and review of secondary resources. The theoretical framework consists of the brief review of the Indian Dalit drama, Black American drama and multiculturalism in the select plays. For this study interpretative, analytical, comparative and evaluative method will be used for the study. The research has read and interpreted relevant information from books, journals, articles and YouTube videos related to this study. For the study the researcher can use interview method.

IV) Significance and Justification:

This research study is of great importance and relevance in times when America emerged as world's most powerful country in India is standing at the golden threshold of a new millennium on the way to be to becoming a great power. It becomes all the more significant and relevant in comprehending the whole society of both countries with common traditions ideologies and the overall word views through this plays.

It attempts to provide valuable insights into the history, politics, culture and sociology of the country by offering and an in-depth analysis of the myriad aspects of multicultural mileu in India and America as meditated in the eight representative plays of the four playwrights. It tries to establish a closed relationship between sociology and history and thus seeks to promote interdisciplinary and comparative studies in the related areas like Histography, Translation, Theatre and Performance studies and so on. This largely unexplored area of research offers extraordinary possibilities and opportunities for the researchers. It is also possible to studies the various literatures in the context of reciprocal influence having certain common cultural and historical bonds. The study thus open up the avenues of critical studies on Indian and American drama adding immensely to the awareness of intrinsic and extrinsic value of Indian dalit and black American drama in the comparative context.

V] Hypotheses:

The present research focuses on the following hypotheses:

- In search of fact finding both written and practical experience of Datta Bhagat, Premanand Gajvi, August Wilson and Lorraine Hansberry are deeply rooted in Multiculturalism.
- The most significant agenda of Indian Dalit dramatists and Black American dramatists process has initiated with new dimensions to acquire attention of world readers to look after rich cultural heritage of India and America.
- The multicultural aspects in select dramatical works highlights their rejection to injustice and inequality.
- The four playwrights are representative of their respective literary traditions and voice the pitiable condition of their communities.
- They document multicultural mileu in the respective countries with an emphasis on caste or colour discrimination.
- Dramas of select authors describe the problems of the deprived classes of the heterogenous societies.

VI] Nature of Problem:

This study seeks examine the multicultural issues of race, caste and identity leading to the discrimination, inequality, oppression and injustice as reflected in the selected plays written by Datta Bhagat, Premanand Gajvi, August Wilson and Lorraine Hansberry. Even the developed countries like America could not settle the problems emanating from the racial prejudices and practices. Similarly India, being the world's largest democracy fails to tackle the issues related to caste discrimination and exploitation. Despite major paradigm shifts brought about by the avalanche of information technology and scientific advancement, the innate human longing for individual identity countries to remain a major tour de force in both life and literature.

VII] Scope and limitation of the study:

This research revolves around the multicultural issues namely race, migration, caste and struggle for identify as presented in the selected play of Datta Bhagat, Premanand Gajvi, August Wilson and Lorraine Hansberry.

VIII] Tentative Chapter Scheme:

Chapter I: The first chapter explains the overall design of the research study and theory of Multiculturalism in detail.

The first chapter gives a brief outline of the research work and theory of multiculturalism along with its belief introduction. It also deals with the multicultural service of the India and America. It poses the variety of presentation of the themes and indicates the significance of the study. The aspects are the integral part of the work. Therefore, the opening chapter tries to give the entire general background about the work. It also offers author's biographical details contribution and style. The first chapter also provides the general introduction to the genre drama, Indian Dalit Marathi drama, black American drama and critical comments.

Chapter II: Multiculturalism in Datta Bhagat's *Routes and Escape Routes* and *Whirlpool.*

Second chapter investigates multiculturism in the Datta Bhagat's *Routes and Escape Routes* and *Whirlpool.* His multicultural views used presented in India. This chapter also focus on cultural diversity in India, the dalit people oppressed by upper caste in India.

Chapter III: Multiculturalism in Premanand Gajvi's *Tan-Majori* and *Wyakaran.*

The third chapter deals with the multicultural aspects in Premanand Gajvi's *Tan-Majori* and *Wyakaran*. It also focuses on the traditional cultural system is changed due to implementation of the constitutional culture. The main identification of these dramas are tantamount to revive the culture of Adivasi and Dalit. It also gives the new intension to see the problems how the culture is suffered due to globalization and cultural diversity.

Chapter IV: Multiculturalism in August Wilson's *Fences* and *Joe Turner Come and Gone.*

The fourth chapter studies the multiculturalism in August Wilson's *Fences* and *Joe Turner Come and Gone*. It explores the evolving African American experience and examine race relations multicultural views among other themes, there is deeper level of exploitation seen throughout these dramas. Even though the civil war has ended, the African Americans will still being treated as object rather than human being.

Chapter V: Multiculturalism in Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raising in the Sun* and *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window.*

The fifth chapter explores the multiculturalism in Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raising in the Sun* and *The Sign in the Sidney Brustein's Window*. The rise of multiculturalism poses many challenges to the traditional American creeds. It attacks the white American cultural values centered on the WASP values, emphasizes the issue of equal power relations among various nations, cultures, questions the racial superiority and cultural discourse hegemony. These dramas reflect many cultural disputes of the time one of which is black women's struggle for equality.

Chapter VI: A comparative study of the Indian Dalit Marathi drama and Black American drama in the light of Multiculturalism.

The sixth chapter is ‘ A comparative study of the Indian Dalit Marathi drama and Black American drama in the light of Multiculturalism’. These eight dramas have been compared by applying the multicultural comparative literary theories. There are various multicultural threads used for the comparative study of the selected dramas.

Chapter VII: Conclusion.

This chapter records the arguments, observations and finding perceived in the process of investigation. Besides, possible areas for the further advanced research are also suggested.

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